

Story #1

U.S. Navy
Fleet Public Affairs Center
“America’s Eye on the Fleet”
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051122-Dyson

“Good Morning America” highlights submariners

By JO3 Maja A. Dyson

NORFOLK, Va. – “Good Morning America” (GMA) joined with Norfolk Naval Station’s Submarine Learning Facility (SLF) Nov. 22 where host Robin Roberts interacted with wet and dive trainers in a live taping of the show.

Machinist’s Mate Master Chief Petty Officer (SS/DV) Daniel Ramos, SLF’s tactics department leading chief petty officer, was in charge of the first simulation that took place on the show. He said, “We do this type of training to help submariners learn how to drive and operate submarines safely. We have trained over 80,000 people here for more than 20 years.”

Roberts interacted with submariners as they explained their equipment and training skills to America.

“This was a perfect opportunity to involve the rest of the world with what submariners do,” said Cmdr. Mike Jones, SLF’s commanding officer. “The reaction Mrs. Roberts had with the Damage Control (DC) “wet” training was the most dramatic part of this visit.”

The DC trainers expose submarine crews to the urgency of a realistic flooding casualty by teaching them to repair leaks in a rapid manner within a safe environment. Roberts also had the opportunity to throw on her coveralls and get hands-on training.

“We got great coverage for the people who never really knew what submariners do,” said Roberts.

Jones said crews are constantly training for any situation that may arise and the live videotaping will show America how serious their job is taken.

After Roberts interacted with the ship and damage control trainers, she conducted an interview with Vice Adm. Charles Munns, Commander, Naval Submarine Forces.

Roberts and her crew then got underway aboard the fast attack submarine USS Scranton, where she will continue her GMA taping on submarine operations at sea.

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Story#2

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050720-Anderson

Joint Expeditionary Tactical Trainer comes on-line

By: Journalist Seaman Davis J. Anderson

NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS BASE LITTLE CREEK, Va. -- The Joint Expeditionary Tactical Trainer (JETT), a new facility at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek which houses the Multi-Purpose Supporting Arms Trainer (MSAT), an immersive simulation system, was brought online in a grand opening ceremony Nov. 17.

Both JETT and MSAT are part of the Expeditionary Warfare Training Group, Atlantic whose mission is to provide training in many areas including shipboard engineering, naval gunfire support and naval science.

“We’ve got to figure out how we’re going to do things smarter,” said Vice Adm. Mark Fitzgerald to a packed auditorium during the ceremony.

He went on to say that this facility would help to reduce waste in the fleet. “To take and run someone 120 times through the simulator before he sees his first live

round certainly reduces the waste, but probably puts that person at a much higher plane."

All those involved with the project agreed this is something good for the fleet.

"Basically you're looking at being able to simulate close-air support and mortar artillery fire," said Marine Capt. Samuel Griffith, a supporting arms instructor at JETT. "It allows you to immerse yourself with the visual graphics into that scenario and do actual call for fire and close-air support missions."

The MSAT closely resembles the inside of a dome. It sits in a dark room in front of a bank of computers that control the images that appear on screen. There are seven projectors arrayed in a half circle and each covers a section of the screen. The image one projector casts is only one part of the synthetic landscape but the edges are married seamlessly to give the viewer a wide view of the simulated environment.

"The MSAT has day and night capability and twilight," said Kerey Howard, a visual engineer for the MSAT program.

"It's a simulated setup so you can use any night vision goggles (NVG) setup and then just look at the screen where it will appear as though it were a night scene."

The actual number of people able to get in front of the MSAT is small but Griffith says this meets the needs of the fleet.

"When you look at how the fleet is organized," said Griffith, "you have two to three Joint Terminal Attack Controllers, Forward Air Controllers or Forward Observers per infantry battalion so you're only looking at a select few individuals that are going to be trained."

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Story #3

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Nassau onloads Marines

By Journalist Seaman Apprentice Charles A. Ordoqui,
Fleet Public Affairs Center Atlantic

NAVAL STATION NORFOLK, Va. - Elements of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) (Special Operations Capable) (SOC) from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., began loading equipment, vehicles and supplies Oct. 31 onto the Norfolk-based amphibious assault ship USS Nassau (LHA 4), in preparation for a regularly scheduled deployment in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Days before the MEU's advanced party arrived, Nassau began preparing for its onload.

"We have to work side-by-side with the Navy to make sure everything runs smoothly," said Marine Corps Master Sgt. Thomas J. Evans, senior combat cargo assistant aboard Nassau.

There is more to the job for the Marines assigned to the 22nd MEU (SOC) than just loading their equipment and waving goodbye.

"We have to work well with the Marines and make sure we have space for everything," said Cmdr. Ed Murdock, operations officer aboard Nassau.

The MEU is composed of four basic elements: a command element, ground combat element, aviation combat element and the MEU service support group; each of which must be moved aboard Nassau for deployment. The advanced party of approximately 22 Marines and Sailors began that mission in Norfolk Oct. 31.

Before the MEU on load began, decisions had to be made about where vehicles and equipment would be stored and in what order they will be on loaded.

"The order that the vehicles are placed on the ship is all decided by the priority that they will need to be unloaded," said Evans.

An amphibious assault ship is designed to accommodate more than 40 helicopters and 1-to-4 landing craft. In addition, the more than 1,500 personnel of the 22nd MEU require thousands of pounds of supplies for them to function as a unit during a deployment.

The MEU and Navy personnel on Nassau worked together tirelessly to get the job done on time.

"We have no choice but to work together, and when there is a job to do, everyone gets along just fine," said Postal Clerk Seaman Curtis D. Crutcher.

While the Marines have an important job to do, their ability to work as a team with Sailors is vital to getting the job done.

"Safety is a big challenge for us, and we really have to have cooperation from the Navy to maintain it," said Marine Corps Sgt. Daniel E. Streeter, platoon sergeant and supervisor of well deck loading operations.

Nassau, the lead ship of the Nassau Expeditionary Strike Group, which includes the guided-missile cruiser Cape St. George (CG 71), guided-missile destroyers Laboon (DDG 58) and Winston Churchill (DDG 81), amphibious assault ship Austin (LPD 4) and dock landing ship Carter Hall (LSD 50), will deploy from Naval Station Norfolk Nov. 4, and travel to Camp Lejeune to on load the remaining 1,500 personnel and equipment of the 22nd MEU(SOC) and set sail Nov. 5.

